

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12-16, 18, 19, 21-24 and 26 are pending. Claims 1, 9, 16, 21, and 24 have been amended. Claims 8, 11, 17, 20, and 25 have been amended. Claims 8, 11, 17, 20, and 25 have been canceled. No new matter is presented.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 8, which contains allowable subject matter. Claim 9 has been amended to be in independent form. Claim 16 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of claim 20, which contains allowable subject matter. Claim 21 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of claim 25. Claim 24 has been amended to be in independent form.

Claims 1, 10, 16 and 21 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Tanio, U.S. Patent 5,726,778. This rejection is moot in view of the foregoing claim amendments. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanio. This rejection is moot in view of the foregoing claim amendments. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 4-6, 18 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanio as applied to either claim 1, claim 16 or claim 21, and further in view of Ichikawa, U.S. Patent 5,717,839. This rejection is moot in view of the foregoing claim amendments. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 7, 19 and 23 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanio as applied to claims 1, 16 or 21, and further in view of Harrington, U.S. Patent 6,178,007. This rejection is moot in view of the foregoing claim amendments. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

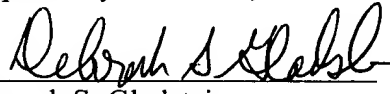
Claim 26 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanio and further in view of Falk, U.S. Patent No. 5,760,913. This rejection is moot in view of the foregoing claim amendments. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772007400.

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Respectfully submitted,

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